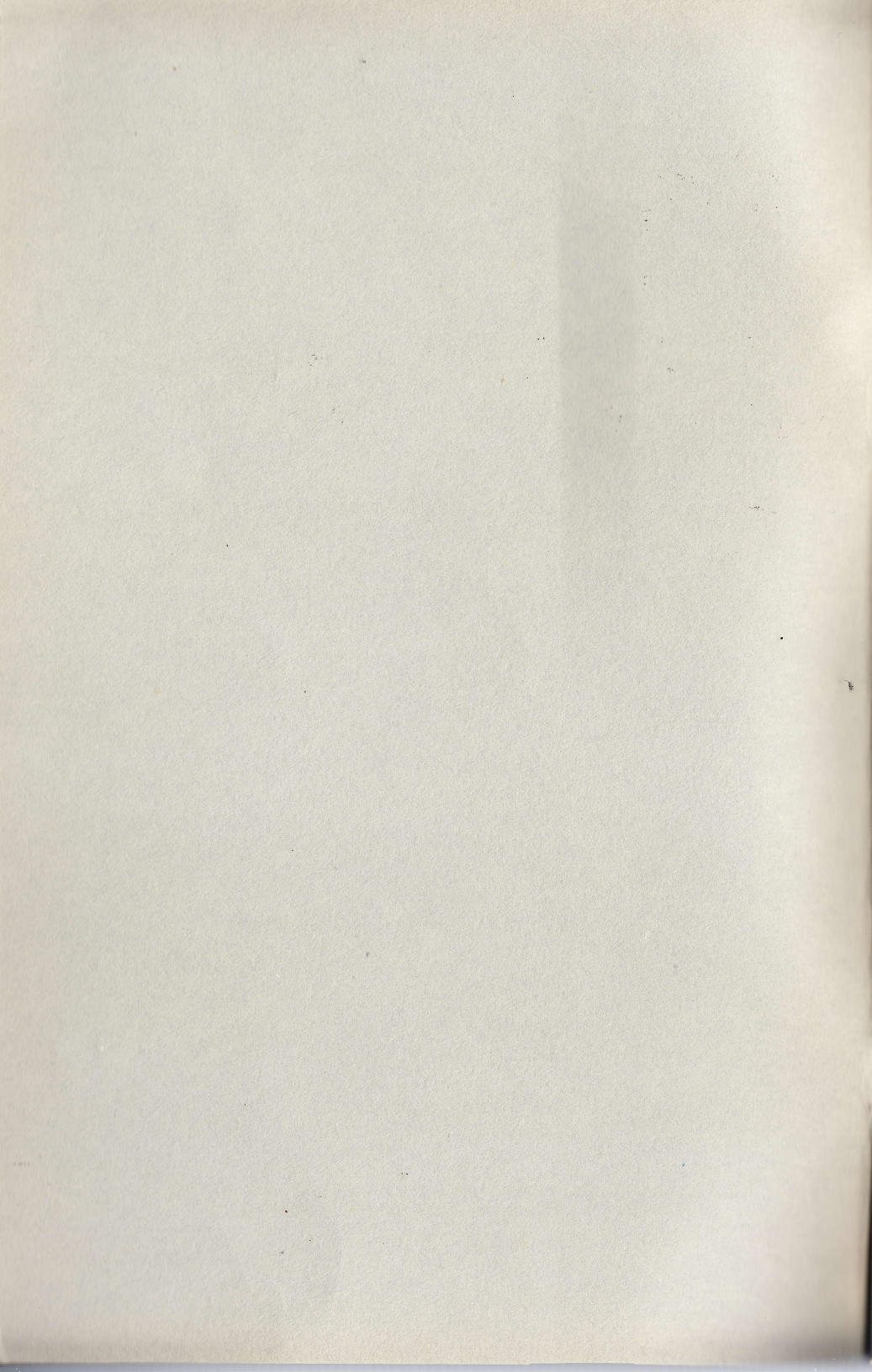


# **P**ROMISED IN CHRIST

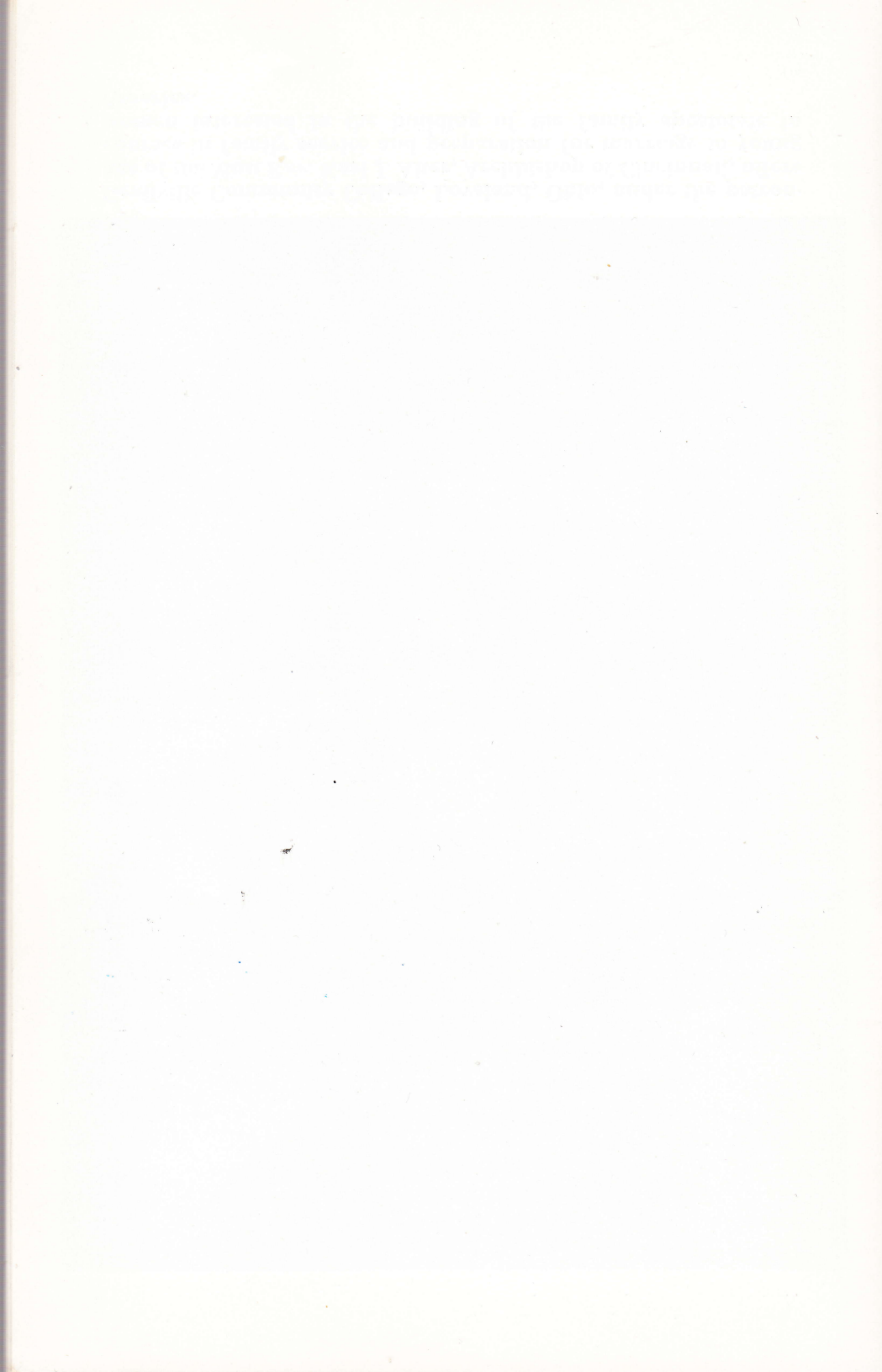
A BETROTHAL  
CROWNING OF A BRIDE

**GRAILVILLE**  
LOVELAND • OHIO

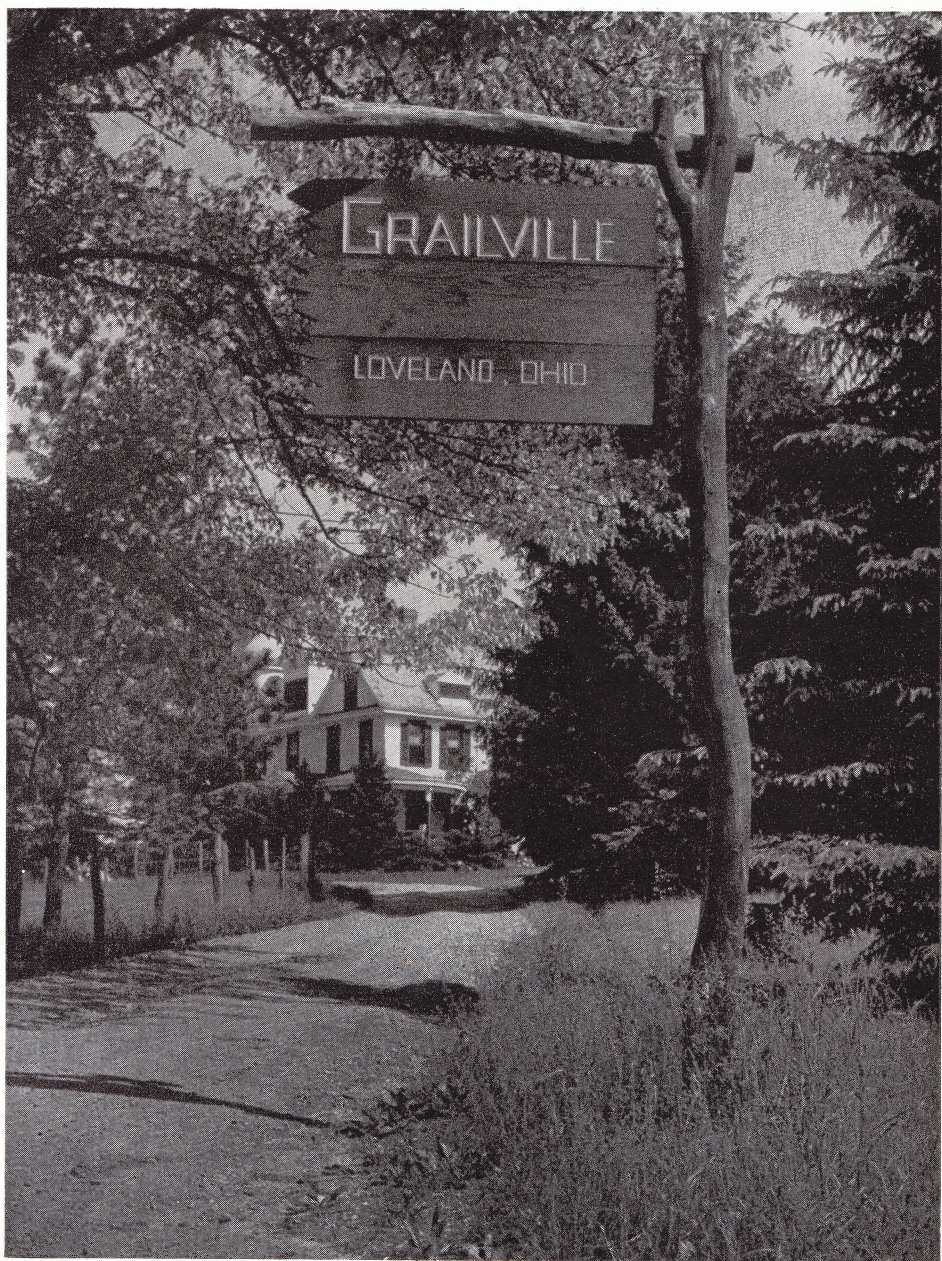












**Grailville Community College, Loveland, Ohio, under the patronage of the Most Rev. Karl J. Alter, Archbishop of Cincinnati, offers courses in family service and preparation for marriage to young women interested in the building of the family apostolate in America.**



# PROMISED IN CHRIST

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Nihil Obstat: Very Rev. Stanley Bertke, S.T.D.

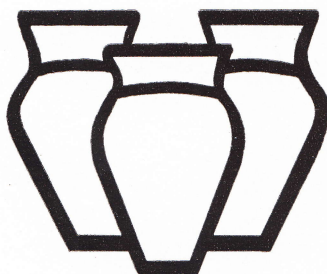
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Imprimatur: Most Rev. Karl J. Alter, D.D.

Archbishop of Cincinnati

"The whole civilized world, all its branches, peoples, and relations between peoples, even the Church itself—in a word, everything really good in mankind—benefits when family life is orderly and flourishing, and when the young are accustomed to look up to it, to honor it and to love it as a holy ideal."

POPE PIUS XII



"Now a marriage took place in Cana of Galilee . . . and the first of His signs Jesus worked at Cana: and He manifested His glory."

St. Luke



## "PROMISED IN CHRIST"

"Promised in Christ" is offered in response to many requests for simple procedures to follow at a formal betrothal and the Crowning of a Bride on the eve of her wedding.

The custom of the betrothal is a meaningful Catholic tradition which is enjoying a widespread revival today. The young man and woman, in the presence of the pastor or his delegated assistant, their family and friends, promise that they will one day exchange the sacred vows of marriage, and in the meantime they will prepare for married life by a holy and exemplary courtship. The engagement ring is blessed, and God's grace and assistance are asked for the young couple. Beginning their engagement with such an observance helps the young man and woman lay a spiritual foundation for their forthcoming period of betrothal.

The Crowning of a Bride on the eve of her marriage is another custom becoming increasingly popular in this country. The coronation of the bride has been a tradition in many Catholic countries for generations, although its origin goes back to the pre-Christian era. In early Christian days, both the bride and bridegroom were crowned with floral wreaths at their wedding ceremony, a practice still observed in the Church of the Eastern Rite. Not only do bride and groom in the Eastern Church receive the golden wedding rings which are the symbol of their eternal and chaste union, but each is crowned with a wreath of fresh flowers and greenery.

Catholics in several parts of the world have wedding eve ceremonies in which the mother of the bride crowns her daughter with the bridal wreath. The wreath has always been a symbol of victory, of accomplishment, of completion. To the young bride at her coronation, the wreath is given as a sign of the successful completion of her life as a virgin. On the following day, the same wreath will adorn the bridal veil at the marriage ceremony, to signify that the youthfulness and untouched beauty of the bride may now flower forth in fruitfulness through the holy marriage union she is entering.

This custom of the bridal coronation is today being adapted by many American brides. The crowning is sometimes combined with a "prayer hour," in which the bride-to-be commits her married life to God's care, and family and friends join together in asking graces and blessings for the bride's new life. If the actual evening before the wedding is not a practical time, there are many other occasions when the crowning and prayer hour may be held: the traditional dinner for the bridesmaids, the wedding rehearsal, or one of the numerous bridal showers and parties.

Today young couples all over the country are growing in a realization that marriage is a holy vocation, a state of life which deserves a serious and prayerful preparation. This new appreciation for the dignity of marriage and its sacramental character, can be given practical expression through such observances as the two outlined in this booklet. These customs not only can help the young man and woman to center their marriage in Christ, but they can also powerfully proclaim to others the dignity and holiness of the marriage vocation.



# **SUGGESTED BETROTHAL PROCEDURE**





The engagement ring is blessed at the betrothal



## THE FORMAL BETROTHAL

Although the formal engagement has not been in wide use in English-speaking countries, it is very well known in other parts of the world and it is in keeping with Christian tradition that the engagement promises of a young man and woman be exchanged publicly before the altar of God.

There is no prescribed form for such a betrothal, and where the custom does exist in the United States, several procedures are in current use. The betrothal in this booklet is an arrangement by the Rev. Philip T. Weller, worked out some years ago on the occasion of the engagement of one of Grailville's students. This procedure has since been published in Volume I of Father Weller's translation of the Roman Ritual, and is included here with the kind permission of Bruce and Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, publishers of the Ritual.

It should be pointed out that no action to force the marriage ceremony to take place is lawful, even after such a formal betrothal, and the engagement may be dissolved by the mutual consent of both parties. However, a breach of promise suit for damages is a possible consequence if one party breaks the engagement. Details on a valid betrothal are contained in Canon 1017.

It is appropriate that the betrothal take place before the parish altar or in a chapel. The pastor or his delegated assistant and a layman and woman, chosen by the couple who are to be engaged, are the customary witnesses. Mass may be offered afterwards, or the engagement may take place in the afternoon, at the discretion of the pastor and the couple.



## A BETROTHAL PROCEDURE

1. The priest (vested in surplice and white stole) with his assistants (vested in surplice) awaits the couple at the communion table. At hand are the holy water stoup and the altar missal. As the man and woman come forward with the two witnesses they have chosen, the following antiphon and psalm are spoken or sung on the eighth psalm tone:

Antiphon: To the Lord I will tender my promise: \* in the presence of all His people.

Psalm 126

Unless the house be of the Lord's Building, \* in vain do the builders labor.

Unless the Lord be the guard of the city, \* 'tis in vain the guard keeps sentry.

It is futile for you to rise before daybreak, \* to be astir in the midst of darkness,

Ye that eat the bread of hard labor; \* for He deals bountifully to His beloved while they are sleeping.

Behold, offspring result from God's giving, \* a fruitful womb won the regard of His blessing.

Like arrows in the hand of the warrior, \* are children begotten of a youthful father.

Happy the man who has filled therewith his quiver; \* they shall uphold him in contending at the gate with his rival.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, \* and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and forever, \* through endless ages. Amen.

Antiphon: To the Lord I will tender my promise: \* in the presence of all His people.

2. The priest now addresses them:

## ALLOCUTION

Beloved of Christ: It is in the dispensation of Divine Providence that you are called to the holy vocation of marriage. For this reason you present yourselves today before Christ and His Church, before His sacred minister and the devout people of God, to ratify in solemn manner the engagement bespoken between you. At the same time you entreat the blessing of the Church upon your proposal, as well as the earnest supplications of the faithful here present, since you fully realize that what has been inspired and guided by the will of your heavenly Father requires equally His grace to be brought to a happy fulfillment.

We are confident that you have given serious and prayerful deliberation to your pledge of wedlock; moreover, that you have sought counsel from the superiors whom God has placed over

you. In the time that intervenes, you will prepare for the sacrament of matrimony by a period of virtuous courtship, so that when the happy and blessed day arrives for you to give yourselves irrevocably to each other, you will have laid a sound spiritual foundation for long years of godly prosperity on earth and eventual blessedness together in the life to come. May the union you purpose one day to consummate as man and wife be found worthy to be in all truth a sacramental image and reality of the union of Christ and His beloved Bride, the Church. This grant, Thou Who livest and reignest, God, forever and evermore.

R.: Amen.

3. The priest now bids the couple to join their right hands, while they repeat after him the following:

The man: In the name of Our Lord, I, N.N., promise that I will one day take thee, N.N., as my wife, according to the ordinances of God and holy Church. I will love thee even as myself. I will keep faith and loyalty to thee, and so in thy necessities aid and comfort thee; which things and all that a man ought to do unto his espoused I promise to do unto thee and to keep by the faith that is in me.

The woman: In the name of Our Lord, I, N.N., in the form and manner wherein thou has promised thyself unto me, do declare and affirm that I will one day bind and oblige myself unto thee, and will take thee, N.N., as my husband. And all that thou hast pledged unto me I promise to do and keep unto thee, by the faith that is in me.



4. Then the priest takes the two ends of his stole and in the form of a cross places them over the clasped hands of the couple. Holding the stole in place with his left hand, he says:

PRIEST: I bear witness of your solemn proposal and I declare you betrothed. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

R: Amen.

As he pronounces the last words, he sprinkles them with holy water in the form of a cross.

5. Thereupon he blesses the engagement ring:

V. Adjutórium nostrum in  
nomine Dómini

R. Qui fecit caelum et terram.

V. Dómine, exáudi oratióem  
meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te  
véniat.

V. Dóminus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spírítu tuo.

Orémus

Omnípotens Deus, creátor et  
conservátor humáni géneris, ac  
largítor aetérnae salútis, per-  
mítte dignéris Spíritum sanctum

V. Our help is in the name of  
the Lord.

R. Who made heaven and  
earth.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto  
thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

O God Almighty, Creator and  
preserver of the human race,  
and the Giver of everlasting  
salvation, deign to allow the

Paráclitum super hunc annulum. Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum, Fílium tuum: Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti Deus, per omnia saecula saeculórum.

R. Amen.

Holy Spirit, the Consoler to come with His blessing upon this ring. Through Our Lord, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for endless ages.

R. Amen.

Et aspergatur aqua benedicta.

The ring is sprinkled with holy water.

6. The man takes the ring and places it first on the index finger of the left hand of the woman, saying: "In the name of the Father," then on the middle finger, adding: "and of the Son," finally placing and leaving it on the ring finger, he concludes: "and of the Holy Spirit."

7. The priest opens the missal at the beginning of the Canon, and presents the page imprinted with the crucifixion to be kissed first by the man and then by the woman.

8. If Mass does not follow (or even if Mass is to follow), if he deems it opportune, the priest may read the following passages from Sacred Scripture:

Tobias 7: 8

Tobias said: I will not eat nor drink here this day, unless thou first grant me my petition, and promise to give me Sara thy daughter. . . . The angel said to Raguel: Be not afraid to give



her to this man, for to him who feareth God is thy daughter due to be his wife; therefore another could not have her. . . . And Raguel taking the right hand of his daughter, he gave it into the right hand of Tobias, saying: The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob be with you, and may He join you together, and fulfill His blessing in you. And taking paper they made a writing of the marriage. And afterwards they made merry, blessing God. . . . Then Tobias exhorted the virgin, and said to her: Sara, arise, and let us pray to God today, and tomorrow, and the next day; because for these three nights we are joined to God; and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock. For we are the children of saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God. So they both arose, and prayed earnestly both together that health might be given them.

R. Thanks be to God.

#### John 15: 4-12

At that time, Jesus said to His disciples: Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine; you the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth. If you abide in Me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you. In this is my Father glorified; that you bring forth very much fruit, and become my disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep

my commandments, you shall abide in my love; as I also have kept my Father's commandments, and do abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled. This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you.

R. Praise be to thee, O Christ!

9. Lastly, the priest extends his hands over the heads of the couple and says:

May God bless your bodies and your souls. May He shed His blessing upon you as He blessed Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. May the hand of the Lord be upon you, may He send His holy Angel to guard you all the days of your life. Amen.

Go in peace!

10. Before leaving the church, the betrothed couple as well as the witnesses will affix their signatures to the document previously prepared for this purpose. A form for the document is given.

## DOCUMENT

In the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

Before Almighty God, before Holy Church and her faithful here assembled, we, the undersigned, have this day promised the eventual consecration of one to the other in the sacrament of matrimony, which is none other than the mystery of that great Sacrament—Christ and His beloved Spouse, the Church. May the Divine Spirit with His grace and manifold gifts enlighten our minds and move our wills to spend the days of our engagement



soberly, piously, and justly, awaiting the blessed consummation of that union to which we have been called and to which we are solemnly pledged. In thee, O Lord, do we put our trust. Let us nevermore be confounded.

\_\_\_\_\_

and \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Church of \_\_\_\_\_

Priest \_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses \_\_\_\_\_

and \_\_\_\_\_

Beautifully designed engagement certificates on parchment paper, suitable for framing and hanging, are available from several sources. The Grailville Art Center does hand-lettered certificates, and Pio Decimo Press, St. Louis, Mo., has a well-designed printed document.





Coronation of the Bride



# **CROWNING OF THE BRIDE**

An Observance for the  
Eve of a Wedding



## CROWNING OF A BRIDE

The procedure for the Crowning of a Bride is divided into three parts. In Part I, the bride is depicted, in her radiance and love, as she comes into the presence of the bridegroom. Psalm 44, a nuptial song composed to celebrate a royal wedding and now applied to the marriage of Christ and the Church, is prayed. Readings follow on Rebecca and Rachel, two beautiful figures from the Old Testament, whom the Church refers to in the Nuptial Blessing at the marriage ceremony — asking that the bride may be “wise like Rebecca and dear to her husband like Rachel.” The first part of the prayer hour closes with a litany to the great women of the Old Testament.

In Part II we consider Christian motherhood, with a selection on the Valiant Woman from the Books of Proverbs, followed by readings on woman in marriage from Janet Kalven’s booklet, “Task of Woman in the Modern World.” This section ends with a second litany, this time addressed to great women of Christian tradition.

In the last section, we meditate on the “great mystery” of marriage, and see it as the symbol of the union of Christ and His Church. The psalm portrays the nuptials of Christ and His Bride, and the reading from the Apocalypse describes the wedding feast of Christ and the Church in heaven. Then, in the Epistle from the Nuptial Mass, St. Paul elaborates on the meaning of Christian marriage and its relation to Christ’s union with the Church.

Now the prayer hour is climaxed in the Crowning of the Bride. After this, a Litany to Our Lady follows, and then the leader prays parts of the Nuptial Blessing from the wedding mass, and the bride herself asks God's grace and assistance for her married life. The prayer hour closes with verses from the "Ubi Caritas," the Church's song of charity and love.

## SETTING FOR THE CROWNING

Simplicity should be the keynote of the Crowning of the Bride and the Prayer Hour. However, a few directions on the seating and the order of the program may be of help.

Focal point should be a table at the front of the room, centered either with a crucifix or a statue or painting of Our Lady; on either side are placed the bridal veil and the bridal wreath. The bride-to-be kneels before the statue, and chairs for the guests arranged behind her in two sections.

The leader should be a priest, if one is present, or the hostess of the evening, or the leader of the apostolic or parish group sponsoring the Crowning and Prayer Hour.

Readers should receive copies of their selections well in advance, and should prepare them carefully. It is suggested that one reader prepare the two selections for Part I; another, Part II, and a third reader, Part III.

Music should be learned well by one person beforehand, and then taught to the whole group before the Crowning begins. The selections are not difficult; however, the antiphons may be spoken if the leader wishes.

As the climax of the Prayer Hour, the bride-to-be kneels to receive the veil, and the bridal wreath. The mother of the bride could most appropriately veil and crown her daughter.

The psalms are spoken with the two sections of people alternating the verses. The first verse is said by the leader's side, and the second one is taken up by the opposite side, with this alternation continuing throughout the psalms. The asterisk (\*) in the middle of the verses indicates that a pause is customary at this point.



# CROWNING OF A BRIDE-TO-BE

ALL STAND Our Father, Hail Mary and I believe in God are  
prayed in silence.

LEADER: O Lord, open Thou my lips.

ALL: And my mouth shall proclaim Thy praise.

LEADER: O God, come to my assistance.

ALL: O Lord, make haste to help me. Glory be to the  
Father and to the Son \* and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall  
be, \* world without end. Amen.

## PART I: THE BRIDE

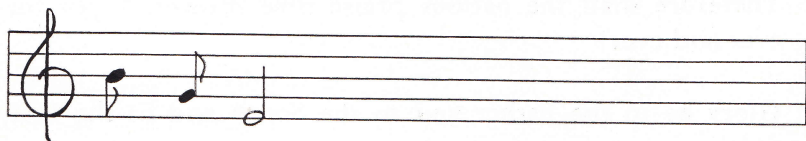
ALL SING:



HEARK- EN O DAUGH- TER AND SEE AND IN- CLINE



THINE EAR FOR THE KING HATH GREAT-LY DE- SIRE



THY BEAU- TY.

ALL SIT

Psalm 44: 12-20

GROUP 1: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline  
thine ear, \* and forget thy people and thy  
father's house;

GROUP 2: The king greatly desireth thy beauty, \* for he  
is thy lord and to him they do homage.

1: And the daughters of Tyre offer thee gifts; \* all the wealthy  
among the people seek thy favor.

2: All her glory is that of a king's daughter within her palace,  
\* in golden robes, attired in richness of color;

The virgins in her train are led to the king, \* her companions  
are brought to thee;

Amid joy and shouting are they conducted, \* and led into  
the palace of the king.

In place of thy fathers, sons shall be born to thee \* thou  
shalt set them as princes over all the earth.

They shall be mindful of thy name, \* throughout all genera-  
tions.

Therefore shall the nations praise thee forever, \* yea for-  
ever and ever!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son \* and to the Holy  
Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be \* world  
without end. Amen.

ALL SING: (Two times) Hearken, O daughter, and see, and  
incline thine ear; for the king hath greatly desired  
thy beauty.

ALL STAND

LEADER: Thou shalt send her help from Thy sanctuary.

ALL: And defend her from Sion.

LEADER: Our Father.

LEADER: And lead us not into temptation.

ALL: But deliver us from evil.

READER: (Comes forward, and stands at the front, facing  
the group) Pray, Father, a blessing.  
(If no priest is present, Reader says: Pray, Lord,  
a blessing.)

LEADER: May God light up the fire of His love in our  
hearts.

ALL: Amen.

ALL SIT



READER:        Reading from the Book of Genesis, the story of  
                     Rebecca:

Abraham was old now, and his life was near its end; and still, in all his doings, the Lord had blessed him. So now he called the oldest servant in his house . . . and said to him . . . "Swear to me by the Lord God of heaven . . . that thou wilt make thy way to my own country and my own kindred, and find a wife for my son there . . ."

So . . . the servant . . . set out, and made his way to the city where Nachor dwelt, in Mesopotamia. He was resting his camels by a well close to the town . . . and he prayed thus: "Lord, Who art the God of my master Abraham, speed my errand today, and show kindness to my master Abraham. I have taken up my post by this well, and the daughters of the citizens will be coming out to draw water. It may be that one of them, when I will ask her to let down her pitcher and give me drink, will say, 'Here is drink for thee, and I will water thy camels as well.' Let this be the bride Thou hast chosen for Thy servant Isaac" . . .

Before he had finished praying thus in his heart, Rebecca, the daughter of Bathuel, came out with a pitcher on her shoulder. A maiden most beautiful, fair of face, and a virgin that had no knowledge of man; and now she had gone down to the well, and filled the pitcher and was on her way back when the servant went to meet her. "Give me a drop of water to drink," he said, "from that pitcher of thine." "Drink, sir," she answered . . . Then she added, when he had finished drinking, "Now I will draw water for thy camels, too, till they have had their fill."

At this the servant bowed low and praised God. "Blessed be the Lord," he said, "the God of my master Abraham, still so

merciful, still keeping His word to this master of mine, and guiding me straight to his brother's house!" So the girl ran back home, and told her mother all that had been said to her. She had a brother called Laban; and he hastened out to meet the servant at the well . . .

Laban and Bathuel had but one answer; "This comes from the Lord; when His will is made known, it is not for us to say Yes or No. Rebecca stands before thee, take her and go on thy way; she must wed thy master at the Lord's bidding" . . . So the feasting began . . . When morning came, the servant rode up and said, "Now give me leave to go back to my master." And when her mother and her brothers would have kept her with them for ten days, at least, before her departure, he begged them, "Do not retain me, now that the Lord has sped my errand so well" . . . Then they said, "Let us send for the maiden herself, and find out what her will is" . . . When she came in, they asked, "Art thou ready to go with this man?" And she told them, "I am ready" . . .

So Rebecca and her maids mounted their camels and followed the servant, who went back to his master with all speed. At this time, Isaac . . . used to walk along a certain road . . . And one evening he had gone out of doors, to meditate there, when suddenly, looking up, he saw camels coming towards him from a distance. As for Rebecca, when she saw Isaac, she alighted from her camel, and asked the servant, "Who is this coming towards us across the fields?" When he said, "It is my master," she quickly took up her veil and veiled herself. And now the servant told Isaac of all that he had done, and Isaac led her to the tent which had been his mother Sara's, and made her his wife, and found comfort over the loss of his mother in his love for her.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

ALL SING: (Two Times) Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear; for the king hath greatly desired thy beauty.

READER: Reading from the Book of Genesis, the story of Rachel:

Then Jacob went on his way, and reached the eastern country. Here in the open plain, he found a well, with three flocks of sheep lying down beside it . . . "Whence come you, brethren?" he asked the shepherds. "From Haran," they answered. And his next question was, whether they knew Laban, son of Nabor. "Yes," they said, "we know him . . . That is his daughter, Rachel, yonder, coming towards us with her flock" . . .

The words were scarcely spoken, when Rachel came up with her father's sheep; Rachel herself was their shepherdess. Jacob watched her as she came; this was his cousin, these were his uncle Laban's sheep; so he moved away the stone by which the well was shut in. Then, when she had watered her flock, he went up and kissed her, weeping aloud; and he told her that he was her father's kinsman, Rebecca's son; whereupon she went quickly home to tell her father the news.

No sooner did Laban hear of his nephew Jacob's arrival, than he ran out to meet him . . . and brought him back home . . . He waited till a month had passed; then he said, "Because thou art my kinsman, that is no reason why thou shouldst work for me free of charge; tell me what reward thou wouldst have." So he answered, "I will work seven years for thee to win thy younger daughter Rachel." "Better thou," said Laban, "than any other husband I could find for her;



stay, then, seven years with me." So Jacob worked seven years to win Rachel, and they seemed to him only a few days, because of the greatness of his love.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

ALL SING: (Two Times) Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear; for the king hath greatly desired thy beauty.

ALL KNEEL A short period of silent prayer follows. Then a Litany to the great women of the Old Testament is led by the leader, with everyone responding "Pray for her," after each invocation.

LEADER: Holy Eve,

ALL: Pray for her.

LEADER: Holy Sara, bride of Abraham,  
Holy Rebecca, bride of Isaac,  
Holy Rachel, bride of Jacob,  
Holy Ruth, bride of Boaz,  
Holy Anna, wife of Elcana,  
Holy Sara, bride of Tobias,  
Holy Esther, bride of Assuerus,

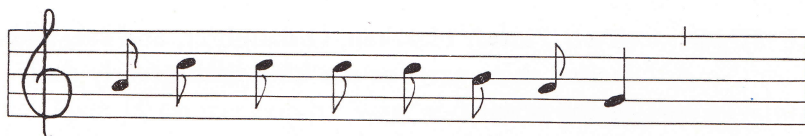
Pray for her.

ALL STAND

ALL SING: (Two Times) Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear; for the king hath greatly desired thy beauty.

## PART II: THE MOTHER

ALL SING:



GIVE HER OF THE FRUIT OF HER HANDS



AND LET HER WORKS PRAISE HER FOR ALL TIME.

ALL SIT

Proverbs 31: 10-31

GROUP 1: Who shall find a valiant woman? \* Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her.

GROUP 2: The heart of her husband trusteth in her, \* and he shall have no need of spoils.

1: She will render him good and not evil, \* all the days of her life.

2: She hath girded her loins with strength, \* and hath strengthened her arm.

She hath tasted and seen that her traffic is good: \* her lamp shall not be put out in the night.

She hath opened her hand to the needy, \* and stretched out  
her hands to the poor.

Her husband is honorable in the gates, \* when he sitteth  
among the senators of the land.

Strength and beauty are her clothing, \* and she shall laugh  
in the latter day.

She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, \* and the law of  
clemency is on her tongue.

She hath looked well to the paths of her house, \* and hath  
not eaten her bread idle.

Her children rose up, and called her blessed: \* her husband,  
and he praised her.

Many daughters have gathered together riches: \* thou hast  
surpassed them all.

Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: \* the woman that  
feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

Give her of the fruit of her hands: \* and let her works praise  
her in the gates.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son \* and to the Holy Spirit,

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be \* world  
without end. Amen.

ALL SING: (Two Times) Give her of the fruit of her hands,  
and let her works praise her for all time.



ALL STAND

LEADER: Save Thy handmaid, O Lord.

ALL: Who hopeth in Thee, O my God.

LEADER: Our Father.

LEADER: And lead us not into temptation.

ALL: But deliver us from evil.

READER: Pray, Father, a blessing (Or: Pray, Lord, a blessing).

LEADER: May Christ give us the joys of eternal life.

ALL: Amen.

ALL SIT

READER: Reading on Woman in Marriage from "Task of Woman in the Modern World" by Janet Kalven:

A woman becomes spiritually mature through finding the particular role in which she can accomplish her dedication to God, either virginity in the cloister or in the world, or the married state. The young woman who has found her vocation in marriage, and is wholly given to her task of bringing her family to God, is a mature person whatever her age. She will have that air of serenity and peace which are the sign of the basic fulfillment of her being. The woman who has never surrendered wholeheartedly to any purpose outside

herself remains immature all her life, like a bud which never unfolds itself.

In marriage, woman can develop a spirit of selflessness which makes her dedication deeper and richer with the years. Her service to her family both expresses her love of God and increases her power of loving. The woman who is constantly concerned with the needs of her family can unfold the qualities of love, tenderness and unselfish devotion which make her truly great and truly happy.

Mentally, a woman's mind matures under the stimulus of the varied practical activities she performs for those she loves. In the concrete, living experience of the family, she can develop sound judgment and a keen insight. The responsibilities of her family life exercise all woman's mental powers. Her intelligence and understanding are exercised in solving the hundred problems of human relations and practical affairs that arise in the course of her day. Her sensitivity and powers of observation are called into play constantly to discover the unexpressed desires of her family, particularly the needs of the helpless child. In dealing with living beings, in the whole complex task of building up a Christian family life, all woman's gifts of intelligence, judgment, sensitivity and insight can be brought to the height of their development.

**ALL SING:** (Two Times) Give her of the fruit of her hands,  
and let her works praise her for all time.

**READER:** Continuation of the reading on Woman in Marriage from "Task of Woman in the Modern World" by Janet Kalven:

The Christian home should be a society in microcosm, at once a school in which the young are introduced to the universe; a sanctuary for rest and relaxation; a temple dedicated to the

praise of God. It is woman's function to organize and direct this complex undertaking, a role which demands intelligence, talents and spiritual qualities of a high order.

One of the greatest of woman's responsibilities is her task as educator, transmitting the fundamental heritage of civilization, the traditions of culture and religion, to the new generation. The mother gives the child his first concepts of reality, the first formation of his mind and character. The child's ideas of God, of right and wrong, of repentance for faults, his first meeting with God in prayer—all come through the mother's teaching. She socializes the young human being, training him to honesty, courage, generosity, self-control, responsibility, and all those other virtues without which society cannot exist. She molds the men and women of the future. No other influence is as strong as the mother's in forming and preparing human beings for life.

Woman not only transmits the foundation of culture to the child; she is the great keeper of tradition in society, conserving the fundamental standards of the race. She keeps alive those religious customs and traditions in the home and community which link the daily life of man to God by so many intimate bonds. She is the guardian of the moral standard, especially in all that concerns the family.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance for society of woman's achievement in the family. But the family can endure only if the woman spends herself wholeheartedly to create a real home. If the woman looks down upon her function and neglects her task in the family, nothing can take her place; the family will disintegrate and with it the whole society.



"Not in the branches of a tree but in its roots do force and power reside." Woman is at the very roots of social life. If she keeps the sources of life pure and healthy, the entire social order will be renewed and reinvigorated by her effort.

ALL SING: (Two Times) Give her of the fruit of her hands,  
and let her works praise her for all time.

ALL KNEEL A short period of silent prayer follows. Then a  
Litany is led by the leader, invoking the great  
women of Christian tradition. Everyone responds  
"Pray for her" after each invocation.

LEADER: Holy Mary, Mother of Christ

ALL: Pray for her.

LEADER: Holy Mother of the Machabees  
St. Perpetua  
St. Felicitas  
St. Monica  
St. Helena  
St. Clothilde  
St. Margaret of Scotland  
St. Elizabeth of Hungary  
St. Brigid of Sweden  
St. Frances of Rome  
St. Rita of Cascia  
Blessed Margaret Clitherow  
St. Jane Frances de Chantal

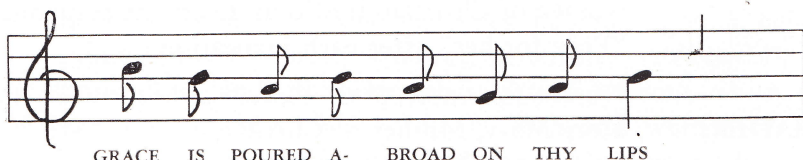
Pray for her.

ALL STAND

ALL SING: (Two Times) Give her of the fruit of her hands,  
and let her works praise her for all time.

### PART III: CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE: SYMBOL OF THE UNION OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

ALL SING



ALL SIT

Psalm 44: 1-11

GROUP 1: My heart poureth forth a goodly song: \* I chant  
my song unto the king!

GROUP 2:     My tongue is like the pen of a scribe \* who  
                     writeth swiftly:

- 1: Thou art comely above the sons of men; grace is poured out  
   upon thy lips; \* therefore God hath blessed thee forever.
- 2: Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, \* O thou most mighty!

In thy glory and thy splendor \* go forth advance with vic-  
tory and reign,

For the cause of truth, of mercy and justice, \* and may thy  
right hand serve thee wondrously!

Thine arrows are sharp, and the nations succumb to thee, \*  
the hearts of the king's enemies are pierced.

Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; \* the sceptre of jus-  
tice is the sceptre of Thy rule.

Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity, \* therefore  
hath God, thy God, anointed thee with the oil of gladness  
above thy fellows.

Thy garments are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia;  
\* stringed music in palaces of ivory delighteth thee;

Daughters of kings are thy escort of honor; \* the queen  
standeth at thy right in golden attire, adorned with splendor.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son \* and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, \* world  
without end. Amen.



ALL SING: (Two Times) Grace is poured abroad on thy lips; therefore hath God blessed thee forever, alleluia, alleluia.

ALL STAND

LEADER: This is a Great Mystery.

ALL: But I speak in Christ and in the Church.

LEADER: Our Father,

LEADER: And lead us not into temptation.

ALL: But deliver us from evil.

READER Pray, Father, a blessing (Or: Pray, Lord, a blessing).

LEADER: With a perpetual blessing may the eternal Father bless us.

ALL: Amen.

READER: Reading from the Book of the Apocalypse:

The twenty-four elders and the four living figures fell down and worshipped God, where He sits enthroned, crying, "Amen, Alleluia . . . the Lord our God, the Almighty, has claimed His kingdom; let us rejoice and triumph and give Him the praise; the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb. His bride has clothed herself in readiness for it; hers it is to wear linen of shining white; the merits of the saints are her linen." And now the angel said to me, "Write

thus: Blessed are those who are bidden to the Lamb's wedding feast" . . .

Then I saw a new heaven, and a new earth. The old heaven, the old earth had vanished, and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw in my vision that holy city which is the New Jerusalem, being sent down by God from heaven, all clothed in readiness, like a bride who has adorned herself to meet her husband. I heard, too, a voice which cried aloud from the throne, "Here is God's tabernacle pitched among men; He will dwell among them, their own God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, or mourning, or cries of distress, no more sorrow; those old things have passed away." And He Who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."

ALL:                Thanks be to God.

ALL SING:        Grace is poured abroad on thy lips; therefore hath  
                      God blessed thee forever, alleluia, alleluia.

READER:          Reading from the Epistle of the Nuptial Mass,  
                      taken from St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians:

Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. He is the saviour of His body. Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it: that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that He might present it to Himself a

glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. So also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it; as also Christ doth the Church: for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular love his wife as himself, and let the wife respect her husband.

ALL:                Thanks be to God.

ALL SING:        Grace is poured abroad on thy lips; therefore hath God blessed thee forever, alleluia, alleluia.

ALL STAND        (Except the bride, who remains kneeling). At this point, a married woman, appropriately the mother of the bride-to-be, comes forward, takes the veil and the bridal wreath from the table, and crowns the bride. She then retires.

ALL KNEEL        A short period of silent prayer follows. Then the Litany to Our Lady is led by the leader, with everyone responding, "Pray for her to the Lord."

LEADER:           O Mary, that she may be always virginal in spirit, surrendered to Christ in all things,

ALL:                Pray for her to the Lord.



LEADER: O Mary, that she may know the joy of true motherhood, giving saints to God,

ALL: Pray for her to the Lord.

LEADER: O Mary, that she may be a woman of love, radiant with the charity of Christ,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of prayer, seeking her strength in God,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of silence, creating tranquillity and peace about her,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of purity, veiling her womanliness in modesty,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of understanding, encouraging and helpful in counsel,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of tears, compassionate for a suffering world,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of laughter, bringing joy and hope to all around her,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of generosity, giving of her own without measure,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of patience, answering with gentleness and love,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of tenderness, shielding the sensitive, consoling the sorrowful,

O Mary, that she may be a woman of hospitality,  
making welcome the poor, the lonely, the weary,

O Mary, that she may have the heart of an  
apostle, drawing all those around her to Christ,

ALL: (After each invocation, "Pray for her to the  
Lord.")

LEADER: Lord, have mercy on us.

ALL: Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

LEADER: Our Father, Who art in heaven, .hallowed be  
Thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done  
on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our  
daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we  
forgive those who trespass against us. And lead  
us not into temptation,

ALL: But deliver us from evil.

LEADER: O Lord, hear my prayer.

ALL: And let my cry come unto Thee.

LEADER: Let us pray:

O God, Who has sanctified marriage by a mystery so excel-  
lent that in the marriage union Thou didst forshadow the  
union of Christ and the Church; look in Your mercy upon

this Your handmaid, who is to be joined in marriage and entreats protection and strength from You. May the yoke of love and of peace be upon her. True and chaste, may she wed in Christ; and may she follow the pattern of holy women: and may she be dear to her husband like Rachel; wise like Rebecca; long-lived and faithful like Sara. May the author of sin work none of his evil deeds in her, and may she ever keep the faith and the commandments.

May she strengthen her weakness by strong discipline. May she be honorable for her modesty, learned in heavenly doctrine, fruitful in children. May her life be good and innocent. May she win the rest of the blessed and the Kingdom of Heaven. May they both see their children's children unto the third and fourth generation, and may they reach the old age which they desire. Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

LEADER:        O Lord, hear my prayer.

ALL:            And let my cry come unto Thee.

BRIDE-TO-BE: O merciful God, Who in the beginning took Eve out of the side of Adam, and gave her to him as a help-mate; give me the grace to live worthy of the great vocation of marriage to which you have called me, that I may love my husband with a pure and chaste love, acknowledging him as my head and obeying him in all good things; that thereby I may please him and live with him in Christian peace and charity.



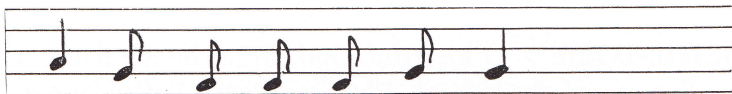
Keep me from all worldiness and vanity. Help me, O Lord, that I may prudently and discreetly guide and govern our household. Enable me to sooth my husband in perplexity, to cheer him in difficulty, to refresh him in weariness, to advise him in doubt.

Give me wisdom and understanding to fulfill my part in the education of our children, that they may be our joy in this world and our glory in the next. Grant that our perfect union here may be the beginning of the still more perfect and blissful union hereafter in Your Kingdom; and this I pray, through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Amen.

### CLOSING SONG



REFRAIN: WHERE THERE IS CHA- RI- TY AND LOV- ING



FRIEND- SHIP THERE GOD E- VER DWELLS.



1. { WE ARE GA- THERED HERE TO- GE- THER  
LET US RE- JOICE AND BE GLAD IN HIM



BY LOVE OF CHRIST. } AND WITH HO- LY FEAR  
IN CHRIST OUR LORD }



LET US LOVE THE LIV- ING GOD,



AND LET US LOVE ONE A- NO- THER



WITH HEARTS TRUE AND SIN-CERE.

## REFRAIN

2. When therefore <sup>2</sup> we are gathered here together in unity,  
Let the oneness of mind that is among us be not destroyed,  
And let no quarrels or harsh bitterness <sup>2</sup> stay among us,  
For in our very midst among us, <sup>2</sup> dwells Christ Our Lord. <sup>3</sup> <sup>3</sup>

## REFRAIN

3. And some day with the Saints in heaven we may behold,  
In all splendor and in glory, the face of Christ,  
Unending joy will then be ours in God's presence,  
Where we shall live for all ages in praise of God. <sup>2</sup> <sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup> <sup>3</sup>

## REFRAIN





## SOME NOTES ON PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE

Young couples today are becoming increasingly interested in practical means through which they can make the time of engagement a real foundation for Christian married life. There is a desire among young men and women to prepare themselves for the new vocation they plan to enter. Together with this awareness of the sacramental character of marriage, goes a recognition of the exaggerated emphasis modern society puts on material preparations for a wedding—and an effort to integrate and subordinate the material details to the real center of the wedding celebration: the reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony and the Nuptial Mass.

The following suggestions may prove helpful to couples preparing for marriage.

### STUDY TOGETHER

One way for the couple to prepare for marriage is by studying the Catholic concept of marriage, the principles of Christian family life and the position of the family in modern society. Pre-marriage conferences for engaged couples are held in many cities of the United States. These conferences consist in several lectures and discussion sessions on the nature and problems of married life, given by teams of priests, doctors and married couples. The "Ottawa course," which originates in Ottawa, Canada, is another excellent program for the study of marriage. Many priests are today taking advantage of such study aids in their premarital conferences with couples. Further information on marriage courses may be obtained from a pastor.

Much of the responsibility for making the home "a school in which the young are introduced to the universe; a sanctuary for rest and relaxation; a temple dedicated to the praise of God," will rest on the future wife and mother. It is important that during her engagement, the future bride begins giving some thought and reflection to practical ways in which the life of the family can truly be centered in Christ; for example, that she studies and learns about the art of living with the Church through her cycle of feasts and fasts; that she explores the literature on Christian family customs, and the available material on such questions as teaching religion to children.

There are numerous books and pamphlets available today which discuss various aspects of married life in the light of its sacramental character, and in laymen's language. Some are listed below:

#### BOOKS:

- "This Tremendous Lover," M. Eugene Boylan, O.Cist.R. (Newman Press, 1947) Chapter 21, "Marriage and Holiness."
- "Christian Design for Sex," Joseph Buckley, S.M., (Fides, 1952)
- "Cana is Forever," Charles Doyle (Nugent Press, 1949)
- "Our Family Book of Life," (Conception Abbey, 1949)
- "The Family For Families," J. Filas (Bruce, 1947)
- "Life Together," Wingfield Hope (Sheed and Ward, 1943)
- "Marriage," Robert Kothén (Newman Press, 1947)
- "Two in One Flesh," E. C. Messenger, 3 volumes (Newman, 1949)
- "Marriage and the Family," Jacques Leclercq (Frederick Pustet, 1941)
- "Art of Happy Marriage," James Magner (Bruce, 1947)

- "The Family in Christ," National Liturgical Week Proceedings (Liturgical Conference, 1947)
- "Mind the Baby," Mary Perkins Ryan (Sheed & Ward, 1949)
- "The Sacramental Way," ed. Mary Perkins Ryan (Sheed & Ward, 1948) Chapter on "Marriage and Family"
- "Christ in the Home," Raoul Plus, S.J. (Pustet, 1951)
- "The Mysteries of Christianity," M. J. Scheeben (Herder, 1946) Chapter on "Christian Matrimony," pp. 593-610
- "Marriage and the Family," Edgar Schmiedeler (McGraw-Hill, 1946)
- "Three to Get Married," Fulton J. Sheen, (Appleton-Century, Crofts, 1951)
- "Marriage: A Great Sacrament in Christ," Franz von Streng, (Benziger Bros., 1939)
- "Eve and the Gryphon," Gerald Vann, O.P., (Blackfriars, 1946)
- "Heart of Man," Gerald Vann, O.P., (Longsmans, Green and Co., 1945)
- "Marriage," Dietrich von Hildebrand, (Longsmans, Green and Co., 1942)
- "In Defense of Purity," Dietrich von Hildebrand (Sheed & Ward, 1927)
- "What God Has Joined Together," Gustave Thibon (Regnery, 1952)

#### PAMPHLETS:

- "Casti Connubii," Encyclical on Christian Marriage, Pope Pius XI, (America Press, 1931)
- "This is Marriage," simplified version of Casti Connubii, (Grailville Publications, 1945)
- "Holy Marriage," Karl Adam (Liturgical Press, 1949)



- "Companions for Eternity," A. M. Carre, O.P. (Blackfriars, London, Eng., 1947)
- "Your Home, A Church in Miniature," Family Life Bureau, (NCWC, Washington, D. C., 1953) Three booklets.
- "Marriage," Fides Album (Fides Press, 1951)
- "A Great Sacrament," Dom Albert Hammenstede, O.S.B. (Pio Decimo Press, 1945)
- "Seven Keys to a Christian Home," Emerson Hynes (National Catholic Rural Life Conference)
- "Task of Woman in the Modern World," Janet Kalven (Grailville Publications, 1946)
- "Our Children's Year of Grace," Therese Mueller (Pio Decimo Press, 1943)
- "Family Life in Christ," Therese Mueller, (Liturgical Press, 1941)
- "Parents are Teachers," Willis D. Nutting (Liturgical Press, 1949)
- "Christian Married Love," Gerald Vann, O. P. (Liturgical Press, 1950)

The couples should not overlook the beautiful and meaningful texts of the Nuptial Mass itself for study and meditation.

## THE NUPTIAL MASS

The Nuptial Mass should stand out as the highpoint of the wedding day; everything else should center around it, prepare for it, reflect it. The splendor and joy of the Mass will then overflow into the surrounding festivities and give to them a freshness and beauty which the meaningless conventions of our day cannot provide.

There are various ways in which the meaning and importance of the Nuptial Mass can be emphasized. For example, copies of the rite of marriage and the Nuptial Mass might be distributed to all present. There are various editions of this available, printed by the Leaflet Missal Co., 55 E. 10th St., St. Paul, Minnesota; the Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, and the Catholic Truth Society. All have a good introduction on the sacrament of matrimony; the Catholic Truth Society edition also contains an explanation of the various parts of the Mass, in terms understandable to non-Catholics.

A choir singing the Mass and congregational participation in the responses and chants—where this is possible—also add to the solemnity of the Mass. It is becoming a custom to hold the wedding Mass at an hour which makes it possible for the relatives and friends of the bride and bridegroom to receive the Holy Eucharist and thus share more fully in the Holy Sacrifice with the couple. Sometimes a small card is inserted in the wedding invitations: "You are invited to receive Holy Communion with the bridal party."

## THE WEDDING INVITATIONS

The growing emphasis on the Nuptial Mass has resulted in fresh new designs for wedding invitations. There are available today from Berliner and McGinnis, Nevada City, Calif., and Pio Decimo Press, St. Louis, Mo., as well as other Catholic publishers, invitations of beauty and appropriateness which express the sacramental character of marriage and the primary importance of the Mass in the wedding celebration. These invitations are designed

with attractive symbols of Christian marriage on the cover and texts from the Nuptial Mass. Sometimes couples with artistic talents design their own invitations.

Another means of expressing outwardly the sacramental character of Christian marriage is through artistically designed engagement and wedding certificates, which can be framed and hung and which the couple might read and re-read throughout the years of marriage.

## ENGAGEMENT AND WEDDING RINGS

Those couples who are aware of the holiness of Christian marriage want to express this great truth in every way possible—both as a reminder to themselves and as a witness to all with whom they come in contact. Engagement and wedding rings can easily be made to serve both of these purposes. Many couples today are having rings designed for them which are worthy of the promise they symbolize.

Two rings intertwined with a Chi-Ro; a cross and crown; vine and branches, are all appropriate symbols to represent the union of the man and woman in Christ. Texts such as “Promised in Christ” for an engagement ring and “Wedded in Christ” for a wedding ring, are frequently engraved on either the inside or the outside of the ring. The Grailville Community bookstore will handle orders for such rings.



## WEDDING RECEPTION

The Kingdom of Heaven itself has been likened to a wedding feast. The wedding breakfast has always been considered a reflection of the Eucharistic banquet in the Nuptial Mass, and a continuation of the communal thanksgiving for the new family created by God. If it is truly this, the wedding feast can be a powerful means of stressing the Christ-centered character of marriage.

A few examples of the decorations, customs and program used recently at various wedding breakfasts and receptions might help to indicate how these elements can contribute to a Christian spirit. Some couples have attempted to carry out a certain theme in their receptions, for instance, the wedding feast at Cana or the figure of the vine and the branches. The wedding invitations, the ring design, printed meal prayers, large hand-lettered wall texts, place cards, the table centerpieces all referred, either in symbol or text, to this one theme. In place of the bride and groom figures on top of the wedding cake, a large Chi-Rho is sometimes used.

One custom which fits most appropriately with the Cana theme is that of blessing the wine. Wine placed on the bride's table is blessed by a priest at the beginning of the meal and distributed to all present with a toast to the bride and groom. The Roman Ritual contains a blessing for wine.

If the arrangements of the tables and the seating of the guests are planned well, it is possible to intensify the sense of community and bind together those present. The pattern of a long main table, with side tables radiating from it, is an effective means of focussing attention on the bridal party and uniting the entire group into one body.

One means which many couples have found to help guarantee the success of their receptions is to enlist the assistance of their friends and relatives, or the apostolic groups with which they have been associated, in the planning and actual work of the celebration, rather than trusting the details to a catering service. By decorating the hall, serving the meal or contributing to the entertainment, the friends of the bride and bridegroom will feel that they have a real share in the joy of the occasion.

An increasing number of young men and women today, who desire to show forth the deepest meaning of the new vocation they are entering, are planning their wedding celebrations along the lines of the suggestions given here. And they are discovering that their wedding guests usually are as pleased with the innovations as they are!





**May they see their children's children to the  
third and fourth generation**



